

Message Text

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E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR

SUBJECT: MORNING SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT REPORTS

1. ITALY: CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATS REFUSE COMMUNIST
PARTICIPATION

AS PRESIDENT LEONE BEGAN CONSULTATIONS JANUARY 12 ON FORMATION OF A NEW GOVERNMENT, THE CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATS (DC) UNANIMOUSLY DECLARED THEIR OPPOSITION TO ANY COMMUNIST (PCI) PARTICIPATION, DIRECT OR INDIRECT. AT ITS JANUARY 9 DIRECTORATE MEETING THE DC, WHICH IS EXPECTED TO NOMINATE MORO AS ITS CANDIDATE FOR PRIME MINISTER:

--CALLED FOR "BASIC ACCORD" AND "OPERATIVE COLLABORA-
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TION" WITH THE SOCIALISTS (PSI), AS IN THE PREVIOUS

COALITION.

A WELL-PLACED MORO FACTION SOURCE HAS TOLD THE EMBASSY THAT UNLESS THE PSI IS WILLING TO DROP ITS DEMAND FOR PCI PARTIFICATION, EARLY ELECTIONS WILL BE INEVITABLE. (CONFIDENTIAL) ROME 450, 1/12.)

2. LEBANON: FIGHTING CONTINUES DESPITE "OUTSIDE INTERVENTION"

EMBASSY BEIRUT REPORTS THAT WITH A WORSENED SECURITY SITUATION IN CAPITAL AND COUNTRYSIDE AND HEAVY FIGHTING CONTINUING IN THE BEIRUT HOTEL AREA, AN ALMOST DESPERATE OPTIMISM ACCOMPANIES TALK OF THE FRANGIE-ASAD MEETING WHICH MAY TAKE PLACE THIS WEEKEND IN DAMASCUS.

--COMMENTING THAT ASAD REPORTEDLY HAS PROMISED TO TRY TO REIN IN THE LEFTISTS IF NEGOTIATIONS PROSPER, THE EMBASSY NOTES THAT THE INDICATIONS OF CONTINUED SYRIAN EFFORTS ARE NOW ALMOST THE ONLY SOURCE OF HOPE IN THE CURRENT IMPASSE.

--ON THE RELIGIOUS FRONT, THE MOST RECENT "OUTSIDE INTERVENTION" WAS REPORTED BY L'ORIENT LE JOUR JANUARY 10. AN APPARITION OF THE HOLY VIRGIN APPEARED IN CHIYAK AND REMAINED THERE FOR A FULL TWENTY MINUTES, WHEREUPON, ACCORDING TO OBSERVERS, IT ASCENDED TO THE SKY IN THE FORM OF A CLOUD. (CONFIDENTIAL) BEIRUT 352 AND (UNCLASSIFIED) BEIRUT 342, 1/12.)

3. UNSC: PLO TAKES ITS SEAT AS SOVIETS TAKE A CHEAP SHOT

USUN REPORTS THAT THE FIRST DAY'S SC MIDDLE EAST DEBATE WAS MARKED BY:

--THE SEATING OF THE PLO WITH THE RIGHTS OF A MEMBER STATE; AND,

--A HARSH SOVIET ATTACK ON THE US FOR "ATTEMPTING TO SUBVERT THE COUNCIL'S WILL THROUGH PROCEDURAL TRICK-
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ERY."

THE SC WILL MEET AGAIN TODAY AT 3:00 P.M. (CONFIDENTIAL)
USUN 89, 1/12.)

4. THE COD WAR: ICELANDIC CABINET CHILLING UK

FOLLOWING A JANUARY 12 CABINET MEETING, PRIME MINISTER

HALGRIMSSON TOLD AMBASSADOR IRVING HE MAY HAVE A RELUCTANT CABINET'S PROVISIONAL CONCURRENCE IN A SEVEN DAY COOLING OFF PERIOD TO PERMIT THE BRITISH TO WITHDRAW THEIR FRIGATES BEFORE SEVERING RELATIONS. THE PRIME MINISTER STATED:

--HE WAS PESSIMISTIC ABOUT POSTPONING SEVERANCE UNLESS THE JANUARY 12 NATO SESSION OFFERED SOME INDICATION THE UK WOULD WITHDRAW ITS SHIPS (WHICH, ACCORDING TO USNATO, DID NOT OCCUR).

MEANWHILE, A BRITISH EMBASSY OFFICIAL HAS STATED THAT HMG:

--HAS CONSIDERED AN AGREEMENT UNDER WHICH PROTECTIVE VESSELS ARE WITHDRAWN ON THE TACIT UNDERSTANDING THAT THE ICELANDERS NOT HARASS BRITISH TRAWLERS;

--BELIEVES SYG LUNS' JANUARY 14 VISIT TO REYKJAVIK WILL COOL THE SITUATION, GIVING THE GOI ANOTHER EXCUSE TO DELAY THE BREAK IN RELATIONS;

--WELCOMES MEDIATION SINCE AT THE NEGOTIATING TABLE THE BRITISH WOULD "HAVE ALL SORTS OF INTERESTING THINGS" TO PROPOSE. (CONFIDENTIAL) REYKJAVIK 61; (LIMITED OFFICIAL USE) REYKJAVIK 63 AND (CONFIDENTIAL) USNATO 121, 1/12.)

5. MEXICAN FOREIGN POLICY: ECHEVERRIA RAMPANT

READING RECENT PUBLIC STATEMENTS BY PRESIDENT ECHEVERRIA (WHO IN ONE SPEECH MADE A THINLY VEILED ATTACK ON RABASA) AND NEW FOREIGN SECRETARY GARCIA ROBLES, EMBASSY MEXICO CONCLUDES THAT:

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--ECHEVERRIA'S ATTACK ON RABASA REINFORCES LOCAL OPINION THAT THE DEPARTURE WAS DUE TO POLICY DISAGREEMENTS, RATHER THAN PERSONAL REASONS.

--GARCIA ROBLES' MAIN ASSIGNMENT WILL BE TO CLEAN UP THE CONFUSION IN MEXICAN FOREIGN POLICY CAUSED BY ECHEVERRIA'S ERRATIC ADVENTURES AND RABASA'S FUMBLING ATTEMPTS TO STRAIGHTEN THINGS OUT.

--GARCIA ROBLES CLEARLY INTENDS TO FORMULATE A GENUINELY ECHEVERRIAN POLICY--RESPONSIVE TO THE PRESIDENT AND THE THIRD WORLD TO THE HILT. (LIMITED OFFICIAL USE) MEXICO 384, 1/12.) KISSINGER

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